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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: JULY 09, 2009

Summary: Reports of two "suspected U.S. drone attacks" on militant targets in South Waziristan dominated headlines in all newspapers on Thursday. However, the number of casualties reported varied from 38 to 60. Newspapers also prominently highlighted reports that the Government of Pakistan announced "the military operations have been completed in Swat and Buner." All dailies carried a statement by the GoP's military spokesman that "Swat Taliban chief Maulana Fazlullah was seriously injured." Visiting British Foreign Secretary Miliband's statement that "Britain fully recognized sacrifices made by Pakistan in the war against terror" also figured prominently.

Most major dailies ran editorials on local political developments. However, continuing military operation against militants remains under editorial scrutiny. The English newspaper, "Daily Times" noted in an editorial titled "The Waning Power of the Taliban" that "the news coming from the region formerly dominated by the Taliban clearly indicates a change in the security situation" but the editorial adds that "the scale of the 'refugee crisis' that has come in the wake of military action is casting gloom over what should normally have been welcomed as a victory." Another English daily, "Dawn," in an editorial titled "Jihad and The State" observed that "perhaps more than anything else, defeat of the militants is impeded by an inability of the security establishment to revisit past strategic choices and admit candidly that grave mistakes were made."

End Summary.

News Stories

"Two Drone Attacks Kill Dozens Of Militants In Waziristan" "Dawn" (07/09)

"Suspected U.S. drones hit two militant targets in South Waziristan on Wednesday, killing 38 militants. (According to AP news agency, 45 militants were killed in the two missile attacks on Taliban targets.) In the first strike, the drones fired six missiles in Laddha subdivision of South Waziristan, killing eight militants in a training camp. In the second attack on Wednesday, drones fired five missiles in an area in the same subdivision, destroying five vehicles and killing 30 militants."

"Swat And Buner Cleared: Govt." "Dawn" (07/09)

"Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Qamar Zaman Kaira on Wednesday said that security forces have successfully completed military operations in Swat and Buner, clearing out militants and

making the area safe for return of the displaced local population."

"Terrorists Getting Money, Training, Arms And Equipment From Outside Pakistan: Kaira" "Business Recorder" (07/09)

"Terrorists are getting money, training, arms and equipment from outside Pakistan, but it is yet to be determined as which country is supporting the insurgency in Pakistan, said Federal Information Minister Qamar-uz-Zaman Kaira in Islamabad on Wednesday."

"Fazlullah Critically Injured: Gen. Athar" "The News" (07/09)

"The chief of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Swat chapter, Maulana Fazlullah, has been critically injured in an attack by security forces, Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Maj-Gen Athar Abbas said."

"Pakistan's Sacrifices Widely Recognized: Miliband" "Dawn" (07/09)

"British Foreign Secretary David Miliband said on Wednesday his government fully recognized sacrifices made by Pakistan in the war against terrorism, adding that Britain was playing its role to mitigate the hardship and strengthen the country's economy, while addressing a press conference in Multan."

"Pakistan And Afghanistan Should Be Treated Separately, Says Miliband" "Daily Times" (07/09)

"Britain, Pakistan and Afghanistan do not like the term 'Af-Pak' used for the two countries as both have a separate status in the international community, British Foreign Secretary David Miliband said on Wednesday."

"Offensive To Go On Till End To Militancy: PM" "The Nation" (07/09)

"Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani has reiterated that the ongoing military operation will continue till the complete elimination of militants from the troubled areas. Premier Gilani expressed these views during his meeting with Chairman Joint Chief of Staff Committee Gen. Tariq Majid on Wednesday."

"One Killed As Bomb Placed In Pushcart Explodes" "Dawn" (07/09)

"A bomb placed in a fruit cart at Chongi Chowk, Peshawar went off on Wednesday, killing a man whose identity is yet to be ascertained. Peshawar SSP (Investigation) Mian Ghulam Mohammad said he couldn't say it was a suicide attack or the blast was caused by a timed device."

"Anti-Taliban Tribal Leader Shot Dead: Official" "Dawn" (07/09)

"A tribal elder Malik Zardad Khan, 55, who was raising a militia against the Taliban has been killed, an official said on Wednesday, in the latest attack against figures opposing the extremists in Khyber Agency."

"Three Women, Two Children Killed In North Waziristan" "Dawn" (07/09)

"Three women and two children were killed and two people were injured when a shell hit a vehicle carrying a displaced family in North Waziristan on Tuesday night. Officials said the family from Manzerkhel area was going to Miramshah, at a time when a fierce clash between troops and militants were under way."

"Four 'Militants' Arrested" "Dawn" (07/09)

"Four suspected Afghan militants were arrested at Sakhi Sarwar check-point on Punjab Balochistan border on Wednesday. The suspects, who are from Mazar-i-Sharif and Heart, were entering Punjab in the guise of religious preachers when they were arrested."

"U.S. Aims To Create 'Deep Engagement With India" "Dawn" (07/09)

"U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, preparing to travel to India next week, has said that Washington and New Delhi intend to

cooperate on an unprecedented range of issues. 'We are working hard with our Indian counterparts to create a very deep and broad strategic engagement,' Mrs. Clinton told reporters in Washington on Tuesday."

"Pakistan, India Show Desire To Improve Ties, U.S. Senate Told" "Dawn" (07/09)

"Chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee John Kerry says he has seen signs to indicate that India and Pakistan are willing to recreate the relationship that existed before the Mumbai terror attacks in November last year, Senator Kerry told a congressional hearing on Tuesday."

"India Pays Terrorists To Attacks Pak N-Sites" "The News" (07/09)

"India has paid terrorists who have well armed and trained terrorist army around 25 million U.S. dollars to mount a spectacular attack on a major Pakistani nuclear site. A special force of around 500 recruits has been assembled and trained to mount the operation that is supposed to shock the world. Some foreign organizations have shared these information with the Pakistani intelligence agencies."

"UN Aid Chief Urges Security For IDPs' Return" "Dawn" (07/09)

"The 1.9 million Pakistanis uprooted by anti-Taliban offensives must not be pushed into returning home before their safety and security is assured, John Holmes, United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, said on Wednesday, as he visited the displaced people in Mardan."

Editorials/Op-eds

"Waning Power Of Taliban," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (07/09)

"The news coming in from the regions formerly dominated by the Taliban clearly indicate a change in the security situation in Pakistan. Received by a 'new mind' in Pakistan, the reports represent a turning of the tide and, more significantly, a change of strategy in the centers of national power.... More significantly, the Taliban 'emirate' of Baitullah Mehsud is fraying at the seams. Commanders unhappy with his policies in the past are now breaking ranks and declaring open rebellion against him. There can be two reasons for their rebellion: that the military operation is having the desired psychological effect; and that more and more Taliban are convinced that Baitullah's enterprise is not going to ripen into a full-fledged state inside Pakistan. Ever more striking is the development of a counterforce in Tank and Dera Ismail Khan - headed by the 'Abdullah' and 'Turkistan' groups - willing to fight the Taliban. Unfortunately, the scale of the 'refugee crisis' that has come in the wake of the military action is casting gloom over what should normally have been welcomed as victory."

"Jihad And The State," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (07/09)

"Mr. Zardari was reported in this paper to have said that 'militants and extremists had been deliberately created and nurtured as a policy to achieve some short-term tactical objectives.' The President is right, and we would add the policy was wrong then and it is wrong now. It cannot be any other way. How is it possible to rationally explain to the people of Pakistan that the heroes of yesteryear are the arch-enemies of today? The militants' religious justifications remain the same; what's changed is that the militants were fighting the state's 'enemies' yesterday but have turned their guns on the state and its allies today.... Perhaps more than anything else impeding the defeat of the militants today is the inability of the security establishment to revisit the strategic choices it made in the past and hold up its hand and admit candidly that grave mistakes were made.... Blaming the United States' invasion of Afghanistan is no good - the first and foremost responsibility of the state is to ensure the security of Pakistan, and allowing an internal threat to create a space for itself is anathema to that idea. Whatever the catalyst, the fact remains that

it was because a Jihadi network was allowed to flourish inside the country that we were left exposed to its eventual wrath against us."

"U.S. Drones And National Interest," an editorial in the country's premier business newspaper, "Business Recorder" (cir. 25,000) (07/09)

"The question is, if American military supplies can be transported to Afghanistan through Pakistan; if its air bases can be used by Americans to support their invasion of Afghanistan, and if many other countries - in much less dangerous situations than Pakistan - host American bases and troops on their soil; we need to look at this issue realistically through the prism of pragmatism. Failure against Baitullah Mehsud and his ilk of murderous criminals is just no option. The Pakistan military simply cannot afford to lose this campaign against him and his gang. Pakistan must win this war at all costs - including the deployment of American drones within a mutually agreed framework."

"Barack Obama's sayings," an editorial in the Karachi-based right-wing pro-Jamaat-e-Islami Urdu daily "Jasarat" (cir. 3,000) (07/09)

"President Obama has claimed that the United States has no plans to control Islamabad and Kabul and does not need military bases in these countries. This is a big lie by him. For the last eight years, the U.S. has been occupying Afghanistan. What else is the meaning of 'control?' What is the need for having military bases when the entire country (Afghanistan) has turned into an American military base."

"Britain Should Convince India For Kashmir Dispute Resolution," an editorial in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (07/09)

"Mere statement by Britain's Foreign Secretary David Miliband that Pakistan and India should resolve Kashmir in keeping with Kashmiris aspirations is not just enough and it would not resolve the dispute.... Britain should convince India for the same, in order to fulfill unfinished agenda of the partition."

"America And Israel's Hostile Designs Against Iran And World Peace," an editorial in liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (07/09)

"America should not be over enthusiastic in its adventurism. It should not support Israel in its bid against Iran, for it would result in large scale destruction reaching out to America and Israel. If Europe can go for missile defense system then Iran should also have the right to take steps for its defense. The international community is duty bound to use its influence against American hostility, rein in Israel and bring Iran and America to negotiating table."

"Hypocritical Kvetching," an op-ed by Rami G. Khouri in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (07/09)

"Iran is ripe for change from within, as we have witnessed in the past decade, through several elections and now in the behavior of many brave street demonstrators. Negotiating with Iran cannot be any more difficult than it was with the Soviet Union. So why the hesitancy - and the anguished, hypocritical debate in the West?"

"Trouble In Xinjiang," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (07/09)

"Some separatist voices have been raised by elements seeking to exploit the situation for political gains. More explosive could be the religious issue, especially complaints by Uighurs that restrictions have been exercised by the Chinese government on their practice of Islamic rites. Given the rise of Islamic militancy in the region, one can understand Beijing's fears. But it would do well to investigate the matter before reaching a hasty conclusion."

"Riots in Xinjiang: Need to be Careful While Protesting," an editorial in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (07/09)

"China is on top of our friends list.... The Muslims killing in Xinjiang province is surely a cause of concern and our protest on it should be similar to the silent ones by Holland and Germany over attacks on their embassies. Any government or public protest should not be seen as interference in China's internal affairs. Jamaat-i-Islami former chief Qazi Hussain Ahmed has given a call for protest on Friday. He should be careful and keep in mind Pak-China friendship, so that no one could blame Pakistan [for the riots?], especially when China has talked of foreign involvement in the riots."

"Xinjiang Riots And Pakistan," an editorial in the Lahore-based independent Urdu daily "Din" (cir. 10,000) (07/09)

"There is a danger of an attempt to undermine Pak-China relations if rioting in Xinjiang increased. Pakistan should immediately clarify its standpoint to China in order to allay apprehensions of a friend like China."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)
Patterson